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ABSTRACT

This booklet is one in a series designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice by suggesting specific classroom activities based on current educational theory and research. Approximately half of the booklet is devoted to a review of current research and theory concerning small group discussion and interaction. The second half presents group exercises in an attempt to analyze group development and processes, group norms, group cohesiveness, conformity, problem solving, decision making, networks, roles, leadership, environment, and interpersonal atmosphere. (LL)

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THEORY INTO PRACTICE

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Instruction in and about Small Group Discussion

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CS 501 143

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Foreword

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system developed by the U.S. Office of Education and now sponsored by the National Institute of Education. It provides ready access to descriptions of exemplary programs, research and development efforts, and related information useful in developing more effective educational programs.

Through its network of specialized centers or clearinghouses, each of which is responsible for a particular educational area, ERIC acquires, evaluates, abstracts, indexes, and lists current significant information in its reference publications.

The ERIC system has already made available—through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service—much informative data, including all federally funded research reports since 1956. However, if the findings of specific educational research are to be intelligible to teachers and applicable to teaching, considerable bodies of data must be reevaluated, focused, translated, and molded into an essentially different context. Rather than resting at the point of making research reports readily accessible, NIE has directed the separate ERIC Clearinghouses to commission from recognized authorities information analysis papers in specific areas.

In addition, as with all federal educational information efforts, ERIC has as one of its primary goals bridging the gap between educational theory and actual classroom practices. One method of achieving that goal is the development by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) of a series of sharply focused booklets based on

concrete educational needs. Each booklet provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research on a limited topic. It also presents descriptions of classroom activities which are related to the described theory and assist the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

This idea is not unique. Nor is the series title: *Theory Into Practice* (TIP). Several educational journals and many commercial textbooks provide teachers with similar aids. The ERIC/RCS booklets are unusual in their sharp focus on an eudcational need and their blend of sound academic theory with tested classroom practices. And they have been developed because of the increasing requests from teachers to provide this kind of service.

Topics for these booklets are recommended by the ERIC/RCS National Advisory Committee. Suggestions for topics to be considered by the Committee should be directed to the Clearinghouse.

Bernard O'Donnell
Director, ERIC/RCS

Theory

Why Teach about Group Communication?

Today's schools provide opportunities for students to experience small group communication both as a learning experience and as preparation for small group functioning within society's business, educational, and social institutions. Flexible schedules, open classrooms, nongraded schools, and individually guided instruction require students to function in small groups to reach educational objectives, but the success of such programs rests on the student's ability to communicate within such groups. This ability is developed through knowledge, observation, and experience in the small group process.

An investigation of group experience facilitates meaningful interaction with others, learning of problem solving, development of commitments, and an understanding of communication and other people.[1] Experiential learning of group processes will provide students with opportunities for self-involvement and self-discovery through which to (1) gain an understanding of group processes, (2) analyze and improve their own group behavior, (3) develop sensitivity to communication attempts of other group members, and (4) develop their ability to observe and evaluate group communication.

Definitions of Groups

Numerous definitions of groups are found throughout the literature. The most popular definitions emphasize that a group is "a number of persons who communicate with one another often over a span of time, and who are few enough so that each person is able to communicate with all the others not second

hand but face to face."[2] They also emphasize that a group is "a collection of individuals who have relations to one another that make them interdependent to some significant degree."[3] In recent works a group is described as "a highly complex structure consisting of individuals, with all their personal characteristics, interacting with one another in a given environment on a particular level,"[4] and as a "collection of interesting persons who have some degree of reciprocal influence with one another."[5]

The Individual and the Group

Each person enters a group interaction with a variety of abilities, personality factors, attitudes, communication styles, and positions. It is the interaction of these variables that affects the outcome of a group's endeavor. In summarizing research on the abilities of group members, McGrath and Altman conclude that "a consistent positive relationship exists between the capabilities and skills of group members and their performance."[6] Yet they go on to observe that "it may not be possible to predict the performance of a group, as a group, from knowledge of individual abilities however measured."[7] Membership performance appears to be enhanced by high member capabilities, but high member performance does not necessarily enhance group performance.

Attitudes toward the task and situation are associated with overall personal success in performance. Authoritarian attitudes have been positively related to striving for high status and negative relationships with sociometric choices as friend or leader.[8]

A group member who is confident in his or her transactions with people in general usually works well in small groups[9] and may be highly rated as an effective participant by peers.[10] Yet the overly sociable person often negatively affects member satisfaction with group performance or with the sociable person.[11] Individuals characterized by a greater than average need for recognition have a less than average need for forming and maintaining social affiliations and usually receive higher peer effectiveness ratings.[12] Investigations of the area of social and task status, or member position in the group, have led to the conclusion that members who have high social or task status in the group are likely to have high power and use it, and react favorably to the group.[13]

The interaction of the individual and the group needs extensive further investigation. In considering groups within

the classroom, Khan and Weiss report Getzel's suggestion that the optimal group composition should allow for matching a person's disposition with the role he or she is expected to play; they conclude that "a group in which an individual's social, emotional and personality needs are met will seem to facilitate and encourage effective learning."[14] Yet enough is not known about determining and interrelating individual characteristics to effectively aid educators in forming small groups with this degree of sophistication.

Group Functioning

When individuals join together to form groups, particularly for the purpose of fulfilling a task or solving a problem, their interactions can be considered in terms of (1) the natural process the group goes through in reaching a conclusion; (2) the norms which regulate their behavior, including effects on cohesiveness and conformity; (3) processes taken in problem solving; (4) techniques of decision making; (5) networks used for communication among members; (6) roles performed by various members; (7) leadership; and (8) environment. As defined earlier, groups are complex structures the members of which interact to affect and change each other and the outcomes of the group. Thus, while an attempt will be made to isolate each of the previously defined aspects of a group, the reader is to be reminded of the interaction of these components on each other.

Group Development

Several schemata for considering the phases of group development have been created from observations of various types of groups. In reporting these schemata, Lawrence Rosenfeld indicates[15] that in 1951 Bales and Strodtbeck hypothesized that groups move from problems of orientation, to problems of evaluation, to problems of control.[16] That is, the group members seek consensus regarding the direction their group is to take, then they reach agreement on the criteria used by the group in critiquing and arriving at their solutions, and finally they attempt to reach the conclusion with some pressure.

Various researchers (including Braden and Brandenburg,[17] Bennis and Shepard,[18] Schutz,[19] Scheidel and Crowell,[20] and Tuckman[21]) idertified related phases through which a group moves and phases which can be used to explore the relationships of group members and the types of communication behavior they exhibit at particular times in the life of the group.

Useful for instruction is Fisher's[22] identification of a four-phase sequence through which groups reach decisions. In the first phase, orientation, group members verbalize agreement with other group members and try to clarify the goals of the group through tentative assertions of ideas and opinions. In the second phase, conflict, opinions become more definite, and disputes over opinions and interpretations erupt. In the third phase, emergence, attitudes begin to change, ambiguity once again appears, and unfavorable comments are reduced. The last phase, reinforcement, is characterized by a spirit of unity and more favorable substantiation and reinforcement of decision proposals.

Norms

Since communication is a rule-governed behavior, communication within groups also follows certain rules which are determined, in part, by the norms of the group. Norms are beliefs held commonly by group members which identify appropriate behaviors for interaction within that group. Such expectations, whether spoken or unspoken, guide the conduct of the group members.[23] Such norms may substitute for the use of power by individual members of the group since there is great pressure within the group for all members, regardless of status, to conform to the norms. The creation of and adherence to these group norms build group cohesiveness.[24] Johnson[25] identified a set of general guidelines for the establishment and support of group norms which includes the following:

1. For members to accept group norms, they must recognize that they exist, see that the other members accept and follow them, and feel some internal commitment to them.
2. Members will accept and internalize norms to the extent that they see them as helping accomplish the goals and tasks to which they are committed. It is helpful, therefore, for a group to clarify how conformity to a norm will help goal accomplishment.
3. Members will accept and internalize norms for which they feel a sense of ownership. Generally, members will support and accept norms that they have helped set up.
4. Group members should enforce the norms on each other immediately after a violation. Enforcement should also be as consistent as possible.
5. Appropriate models and examples for conforming to the group norms should be present. Members should have the chance to practice the desired behaviors.

6. Cultural norms that help in goal accomplishment and group maintenance and growth should be imported into the group.
7. Because norms exist only to help group effectiveness, they should be flexible so that at any time more appropriate norms can be substituted.[26]

Cohesiveness

Cohesiveness refers to the feeling of unity held by group members which usually results in their taking pride in the group and in the group product. A highly cohesive group is more committed to the group's goals and is more likely to conform to group norms than a low-cohesion group. Members of highly cohesive groups tend to talk more often and more openly than people in less cohesive groups.

In attempting to relate cohesiveness and norms, Seashore[27] found that there were norms of highly cohesive groups which endorsed high productivity and norms of other highly cohesive groups which endorsed low productivity, and that the actual performances were directly related to the norm selected. Johnson and Johnson report that "Although cohesive groups may show greater acceptance, intimacy, and understanding, there is also evidence that they allow greater development and expression of hostility and conflict than do noncohesive groups.[28] With highly cohesive groups' abilities to voice hostility and then resolve conflicts, they thus tend to have increased productivity.

Conformity

Rosenfeld summarizes the research in conformity as follows:

> The more important the group is to the individual, the greater the probability of his conforming to the group. The greater the amount of interaction, the higher the probability of conformity. Generally, the more group members are aware of each other's opinions, the greater the probability of attitude convergence. Increased interaction can insure this increase in awareness.[29]

Rosenfeld cites Blake and Moulton[30] in stating, "The greater the competition between groups, the greater the conformity [within groups].[31] In addition, Rosenfeld indicates that conformity increases with (1) increased group size up to four people, (2) increased opportunity for intermember interaction, (3) increased task difficulty, and (4) increased ambiguity of situation.

Problem Solving

Problem solving is viewed as the process of identifying and encountering obstacles which block the accomplishment of a goal.[32] By identifying the desired goal, the group is determining the desired state of affairs, which must be different from the current state of affairs. Generally, problem solving involves (1) defining what the problem actually is, and stating it specifically; (2) determining the causes and implications of the problem; (3) setting the criteria or standards a workable solution must meet; (4) examining and evaluating as many potential solutions as possible; (5) selecting the best solution which meets the criteria necessary for solving the problem as defined; and (6) implementing the solution.

As Keltner indicates, solving a particular problem requires making a series of decisions. The group must decide exactly what the scope of the problem is, what factors are involved in creating the problem, what criteria must be met to satisfactorily solve the problem, what alternative strategies exist, and what the best solution is. Because there is usually no "correct" answer, the group must make judgments regarding the issues—and decisions on evaluative positions often stimulate much interaction. Thus, the dynamics of the group will affect the type of decisions reached and the manner in which decisions are made.

Decision Making

In distinguishing between problem solving and decision making, Keltner states that "problem solving is a system of arranging and organizing decisions so that they will have the greatest usefulness or value,"[33] and he defines a group decision as "a collection of common individual commitments."[34] While all group members may not share equal enthusiasm for a decision the group endorses, pressure exists to conform to the group decision.

Group decisions can be made by consensus, majority vote, compromise, or minority control, or by an individual group member who, as an expert or authority, is designated as decision maker. These types of decision making have varying strengths and limitations.

Decision by consensus has the greatest strength of all the types of decisions because it involves the unanimous support of *all* group members. While such a perfect consensus is not always possible, a consensus is often defined as "a collective

opinion arrived at by a group of people working together under conditions that permit communications to be sufficiently open—and the group climate to be sufficently supportive—so that everyone feels he has had his fair chance to influence the decision."[35] A consensus takes more time to reach than any other type of decision, but it has the strong support of most group members.

Decision by majority vote is frequently used to reach a decision that at least 51 percent of the group participants agree upon. Although the actual process of voting does not have to take very long, decision by majority usually implies that the participants have had the opportunity to voice their opinions freely before the final vote is taken. Thus, the outcome represents the majority's view, but dissenting voices have been heard.

Decision by compromise occurs when the group has polarized views on an issue and is unable or unwilling to resolve the problem by voting. In these circumstances, a middle-of-the-road position is sought either by averaging the opinions or negotiating a position which represents a more-or-less central stand. This method of decision making may take considerable time if the group as a whole must reach a compromise, or it may be a very quickly accomplished task if a leader determines the "average" opinion of the group. This type of decision is usually of lesser quality than a decision reached by consensus or majority vote, and it frequently does not have the full support of any of the group members (other than those who initially held that view).

Decision by minority control may occur when a subcommittee of the group is designated to consider the issues and determine the best decision. While this form of decision making can be an efficient way of reaching a decision when the entire group cannot convene or is unable to reach a decision, it is not as satisfactory as other types of group decisions because it does not build a total group commitment to the decision and does not resolve conflicts which might still be festering in the group.

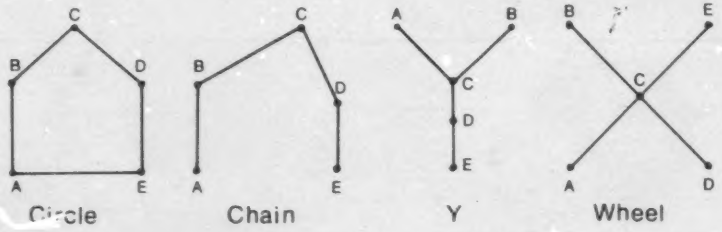
An expert or authority who is a member of the group may be designated to make a decision for the group. In either case, the group members may give their opinions for the leader to consider in reaching a decision. As long as the group members perceive of the leader or expert as having the group's concern in mind and as being credible, they will probably accept the decision reached. However, if the designated decision maker

does not have the confidence or support of the group, the group is not likely to accept the decision.

Factors such as group size, homogeneity of opinions, time constraints, leadership, group commitment, and the nature of the decision to be reached all affect the decision-making process. Varying types of decisions may be desirable in different circumstances.

Networks

The patterns of interaction or communication flow among group members constitute the networks of the group, and these structures of the group determine in large part the performance of the group. By carefully controlling possible interactions among group participants in a laboratory setting, Leavitt[36] investigated the effects of circle, wheel, chain, and Y networks (see diagram[37]) on leadership. His results indicate that people in the most central position (position in the chain, wheel, and Y networks as shown in the diagram) were identified as leader, but in the circle network, which had no central position, no person was identified as a leader. Leavitt found that group members in the more central positions were more satisfied with their experience in the group than were members in peripheral positions, and that all group members in the circle formation were more satisfied than the group members in a centralized pattern.



The position held by a group member in particular networks may affect the behavior, satisfaction, and effectiveness of the participant. Rosenfeld defines the concept of saturation as "the number of requirements a position can handle before it is overloaded," and he indicates that "a position has communication requirements, decision requirements and

information requirements."[38] In a summary regarding group member satisfaction, Collins and Guetzkow make the following statement:

> Because of the remoteness of most group outputs to individual behavior, most satisfactions stem from the interpersonal rewards directly provided by interaction among participants. When there is congruence among member motivation and when there is agreement upon leadership, then satisfactions are generated. When participants interact with persons they like and who like them, they tend to be satisfied. Given needs for power and autonomy, it was noted that individuals who occupy roles which permit the exercise of power and autonomy tend to gain more satisfaction than those who occupy group roles which do not permit such access to such role-related rewards.[39]

Thus, member satisfaction and position within a group network interact and, in turn, affect and are affected by the product and performance of the group.

Roles

Examining the rules assumed by members of a group provides an additional way to consider group processes. A role may be defined as "the collection of rights, duties, attitudes and values that constitute norms defining behavior appropriate to performing a given function in a given group"[40] or, more simply put, as a "pattern of behavior which characterizes an individual's place in a group."[41]

The role assumed by individuals within a group will depend on their backgrounds, abilities, and needs,[42] as well as on their own and others' expectations. The individual characteristics people bring to the group will affect such factors as their content expertise, leadership ability, and need for recognition, structure, and harmony.

Benne and Sheats[43] developed a system for observing and coding roles as they could function instrumentally in accomplishing group progress. Within their system, members' roles are assigned to the following three categories: group task roles, including behaviors that relate to the group's ability to solve the task problem; group building and maintenance roles, which help create a group-centered attitude and solve social-emotional problems; and self-centered and individual roles, which aim at solving individual problems or satisfying individual needs.

The Bales system of interaction process analysis provides another means of viewing group roles. While working through the three developmental phases of orientation, evaluation, and

control, groups establish an equilibrium in the types and distribution of acts performed within both the task and the social-emotional areas. The breakdown of roles within the task and social-emotional areas is as follows:

Social-Emotional Area—Positive

1. *Shows solidarity*, raises others' status, gives help, rewards
2. *Shows tension release*, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction
3. *Shows agreement*, shows passive acceptance, understands, concurs, complies

Task Area—Neutral

4. *Gives suggestions*, direction, implying autonomy for others
5. *Gives opinion*, evaluation, analysis, expresses feeling, wish
6. *Gives information*, orientation, repeats, clarifies, confirms
7. *Asks for information*, orientation, repetition, confirmation
8. *Asks for opinion*, evaluation, analysis, expression of feeling
9. *Asks for suggestion*, direction, possible ways of action

Social-Emotional Area—Negative

10. *Disagrees*, shows passive rejection, formality, withholds help
11. *Shows tension*, asks for help, withdraws out of field
12. *Shows antagonism*, deflates others' status, defends or asserts self [44]

Another way of looking at roles is within the "silent structure" of functional, dysfunctional, and accidental roles.[45] Functional roles include those social and task behaviors perceived to move the group along, while dysfunctional roles tend to disrupt the functioning of the group. Accidental roles are those nonbehaviorally assigned, such as newest or youngest group member, but which may have a significant effect on the individual's role behavior and complementary role behavior.

In summary, each individual may fill more than one role at a time, change roles during the group development stages, and affect the other roles which emerge in the group. The existence and importance of different roles will vary according to the need, makeup, and functioning of each group.

Leadership

Sometimes considered to be a role within a group, leadership has received extensive attention from group communication researchers. Issues such as leader performance, styles of

leadership, and theories of leadership have undergone numerous investigations.

In their summary of leadership performance research McGrath and Altman report the following:

> Effective leadership behavior seems to be a function of a number of characteristics and conditions:
>
> 1. Individual personality characteristics such as extroversion, assertiveness, and social maturity . . .
> 2. Education, but not age or other biographical characteristics
> 3. Intelligence, general ability and task ability
> 4. High group status
> 5. Training in leader techniques [46]

Behaviorally effective leaders tend to be characterized by a high frequency of problem proposing, information seeking, and ego involvement. Although it is usually clear who will emerge as a leader, it is unclear what behaviors distinguish effective leaders from nonleaders. [47]

Styles of leadership may include the general categories of (1) laissez-faire, in which the nominal leader attempts to deny any personal responsibility; (2) group centered, in which the leader encourages the group members to assume responsibility for planning, directing, and evaluating the group; and (3) leader centered, in which the formally designated leader assumes principal responsibilities for directive functions. On a continuum these styles are often ranged according to their popular names, from "free rein" to democratic to authoritarian.

Other styles of leadership include the leaderless group, in which everyone shares the coordination of group activity, [48] and nondirective leadership, in which the leader avoids dominating the group in order to encourage group members to take more initiative and to minimize the leader's personal power. The leadership style chosen may be influenced by a leader's perception of the status and credibility of the group members, [49] the leader's security in an ambiguous situation, the extent to which the motives for leading the group are tied to personal self-satisfaction, and the extent to which self-satisfaction is derived from the group's goal attainment. [50] Limited information exists on the effect, if any, the presence of a good leader has on task performance or group members. [51] Differences in productivity appear to be inconclusive, although it seems that groups with leader-centered leaders are more productive. [52]

Some other models for leadership development may be found in work by Fiedler [53] and by Bronson. [54] Fiedler developed a contingency model of leader effectiveness and leadership behaviors, since maintenance-oriented leaders were more effective in certain situations, and task-oriented leaders were more effective in other situations. Thus, the effectiveness of leadership style seems to be a function of the favorableness of the situation. Much additional research in the area of leadership performance and effectiveness is needed before the puzzle pieces of leadership process will be in place.

Observation Instruments

Several observation and recording systems have been designed for the purposes of constructing theories about group communication, obtaining data to test out these theories, and classifying group members' behavior and interactions to make sense out of the group processes. Although these observation instruments were created for research purposes, they may be useful devices for observing and discussing group processes in the classroom.

A category system is the type of observation instrument which specifies in advance all of the types of behavior which are expected to occur in an interaction. An observer is to place every behavior that occurs in the group into one of the categories. Bales Interaction Process Analysis, [55] which was described in the section on roles, is one of the most frequently used category systems for observing and recording group member behavior. A sentence, clause, or utterance may be the unit of interaction which is scored. Specifically, it is "the smallest discriminable segment of verbal or nonverbal behavior to which the observer, using the present set of categories, after appropriate training, can assign a classification under conditions of continuous serial scoring." [56]

To use Bales' system to record a small group discussion within the class, create a matrix by listing the twelve basic categories down the left-hand margin of a wide piece of paper (shows solidarity, shows tension release, shows agreement, gives suggestions, gives opinion, gives information, asks for information, asks for opinion, asks for suggestion, disagrees, shows tension, and shows antagonism) and then drawing vertical lines down the sheet to create a series of narrow columns. These columns may be numbered consecutively and are used to record a single interaction. Each student in the group is assigned a number. Interactions are recorded in

sequence by writing the number of the student who spoke followed by the number of the student to whom the comment was addressed. If a comment is made to the whole group, the number of the student who made the comment is followed by a zero (i.e., 2-0). The numbers are written in the row which represents the verbal or nonverbal behavior initiated by the student. Only one interaction is recorded in each column.

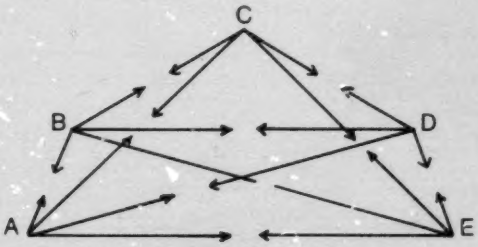
By examining the matrix after the discussion, the following questions raised by Goldberg and Larson (as well as others) can be explored:

> Whether a group progresses through certain phases in problem solving, whether task and social-emotional behaviors are balanced or disproportionate, whether certain members disproportionately engage in specific forms of behavior, whether specific members' behavior varies with respect to the problem phase (orientation, evaluation, control, etc.) through which the group is progressing, whether certain members talk disproportionately to certain other members, [and] whether group interaction assumes a particular form or pattern following decision proposals.[57]

Another category system may be used to record roles played by individuals within the group. Group task roles (including initiator-contributor, information seeker, opinion seeker, information giver, opinion giver, elaborator, coordinator, orienter, evaluator-critic, energizer, procedural technician, and recorder), group building and maintenance roles (including encourager, harmonizer, compromiser, gatekeeper and expediter, standard-setter or ego ideal, group-observer and commentator, and follower), and "individual" roles (including aggressor, blocker, recognition-seeker, self-confessor, playboy, dominator, help-seeker, and special-interest pleader) were categorized by Benne and Sheats.[58] To record communication behaviors of individuals as a group attempts to solve a problem or make decisions, a matrix may be created with these role categories written down the left-hand margin of a paper and the group members' names written across the top. Each time a participant fulfills one of the roles, a mark is placed in the appropriate role box under his or her name. A tally of each member's roles at the end of the discussion may be useful in identifying the extent to which group members fulfilled the various roles and the degree to which the members facilitated or impeded the group process.

Another observation instrument, using a computerized system for analyzing patterned and nonpatterned interaction in five-person groups and the direction of their message flows,

was developed by William B. Lashbrook.[59] A patterned (or interactive) communication message is one which is relevant to the previous message and/or lasts less than 45 seconds. A nonpatterned (or noninteractive) communication message is one which lasts longer than 45 seconds and/or has low relevance to the message before it. In the following schematic representation, letters A, B, C, D, and E represent the small group



participants. Each time one person interacts directly with another person for a period of less than 45 seconds, a slash mark is recorded across the appropriate communication line. Each time a participant makes a noninteractive comment, a mark is made next to his or her letter outside the communication lines. These recordings are made over three equal time intervals during the group discussion. With the data from the resulting recordings, group variables can be analyzed by the PROANA5 computer program.[60] Questions such as the following can then be asked: Was anyone isolated? What type of network seemed to be used? Who was the leader? Did the leader emerge or was the leader a procedural leader? Was there a clique group? Did anyone dominate the discussion? Was the communication balanced among the participants?

While PROANA5 is graphically desirable for recording the interactions of groups with five members, this type of schematic representation becomes very complicated when recording the interactions of more than five people. To record patterned and nonpatterned interactions for more than five people, a matrix can be created (see diagram). All of the participants' names are recorded down the left-hand margin and across the top of a sheet of paper. Lines are drawn to separate the names and to create columns and rows. For each nonpatterned statement a slash mark is recorded in the cell designated by the person's name only (i.e., Grace-Grace, cell 1).

Each patterned statement is recorded in the appropriate cell indicated by the interaction of the source and the receiver. For example, if Joe speaks to Carol, a mark would be made in cell 8 (Joe-Carol). At the end of the discussion, the same questions as were suggested for processing PROANA5 can be raised.

		Receivers				
		Grace	Joe	Carol	Joyce	Chuck
Sources	Grace	/				
	Joe			/		
	Carol					
	Joyce					
	Chuck					

These observation schemes are representative examples of instruments which can be used for observing and recording group interactions. Their use should aid the understanding of what takes place as people join together to solve problems and make decisions. It is recommended that students be trained to use one or more of these instruments and that observers record the interactions of their peers in the group exercises which are suggested in the "Practice" section of this booklet. It may be especially informative to have several different students, each with a different observation instrument, observe and record a small group interaction. The follow-up discussion could then include various perspectives.

Environmental Effects

The physical size of a group—its arrangement, place, and time—affects the environment. Relatively small group size is likely to be accompanied by the following effects:

1. Less perceived need for guidance and for a definite leader, but less perceived competence and ability of the group as a whole
2. Fewer expressed ideas and less change in attitudes or other responses by members
3. Less frequent perceptions of the leader as exhibiting coordinating behavior, clarifying roles, or wisely delegating authority
4. Greater perception of task success[61]

The larger the group, the less feedback each individual can receive, which may lead to a breakdown in communication accuracy. Examining correlates of group size, Slater found that

members of five-member groups were most satisfied. Members of smaller groups were more concerned about alienating others with their ideas, and members of larger groups believed that things became disorderly.[62] Another difficulty is that large groups tend to develop subgroups with divergent goals,[63] a tendency which may undermine the original purposes of the larger group.

Factors such as eye contact and proximity are affected by the arrangement of group members, for "the arrangement of chairs in a discussion circle influences interaction; persons adjacent to each other tend to direct their remarks to persons they can see."[64] Thus, persons in a circle tend to talk to those opposite them rather than to the persons who sit on either side. "At a rectangular table the individuals who sit at the corners contribute least to the discussion and the central and head positions appear dominant."[65] Sommer found that at rectangular tables subjects sitting side by side were physically closer but interacted less than people sitting corner to corner.[66] The trend in all the results is that people sitting in relatively neighboring chairs, regardless of exact position, will be more likely to interact than people in chairs that are not close together.

Certain group shapes help reinforce positions of leadership or dominance. Although it is difficult to "take leadership" in a circular setting, the "head" of a rectangular table is often equated with a position of leadership since the person in that location has the greatest amount of eye contact with all members and the most effective position for controlling the flow of messages. The purpose of the group may affect how members arrange their seating and therefore their communication. In a study where groups were asked to make collective or individual decisions, the members making individual choices spread their chairs out, while those involved in a collective decision placed their chairs close together.[67]

Additionally, whether a group has unlimited time or a tight time schedule in which to reach its goal will affect the atmosphere. An increase in leader direction and decrease in social-emotional effort may be associated with a group under a strict time schedule. Finally, the attractiveness of the setting has some effect on group atmosphere. Based on studies such as Maslow and Mintz's "beautiful-ugly" room research, Mehrabian concludes that "people tend to be more plesant [reinforcing] to one another and to like each other better in pleasant rather than unpleasant settings."[68]

The Role of the Teacher and Class Atmosphere

Very often teachers will bemoan the fact that they do most of the work in class discussion, and even then there are days when the discussion falls apart. While breakdowns in group discussion may be attributed to factors such as a day's excitement, community culture, and class composition, there are controllable variables which tend to affect the success of class discussions. Teachers can change the group communication within their class through attention to the interpersonal atmosphere of the entire class and teaching group process skills to the students.

If a class is expected to work in small groups or to cooperate in class discussions, it cannot be assumed that individuals will learn about other class members in the halls or cafeteria. Class time must be devoted to sharing information about the group members, including the teacher. As the term progresses, occasional periods may be set aside for sharing of backgrounds, interests, and feelings for the sole purpose of developing greater understanding and trust among class members. Benefits may result in a student's increased willingness to speak, to risk expressing certain ideas or feelings, to be supportive of others, or to make an attempt to understand another's point of view. Setting up an interpersonal atmosphere conducive to sharing, risk-taking, and mutual support is vital to encouraging effective group communication.

The teacher should provide in-class group problem-solving discussions and decision-making exercises for the group to work through before attempting a full group problem-solving discussion. These discussions and exercises should help to build class cohesiveness and provide a stimulus for discussing such areas as leadership, roles, and group development. The teacher may lead some of the initial discussions; over time, however, students should assume responsibility for leadership duties.

As a basis for learning sessions in group procedure, Johnson and Johnson recommend the following seven-step discussion outline, which aids in reaching productive group communication:

1. Definitions of terms and concepts
2. Establishment of discussion goals: identification of major themes to be discussed
3. Allocation of time

4. Discussion of the major themes and subtopics
5. Integration of the material (relating material to previous topics and other readings)
6. Application of material (identifying implications of material for self)
7. Evaluation of quality of discussion [69]

Within this discussion framework teachers and/or student leaders will have the responsibility for the following tasks: introducing the topic, keeping time, promoting an accepting climate, calling attention to major ideas, asking probing questions, encouraging participation, intervening when a member becomes disruptive, and summarizing and closing the discussion. As students go through the information and exercises related to group development, they may assume more and more of the leadership functions.

The teacher's role in such a class is critical since he or she will serve as a model for desirable communication behavior and will be responsible for developing an atmosphere of trust, sharing, and growth. It is important that teachers participate in some of the group exercises, accept feedback on personal behavior within a group, and take risks by expressing their own ideas and feelings.

In the "Practice" section there are a variety of exercises through which students may internalize the information presented in the "Theory" section. These exercises will be effective only if they are related back to the original information and if time is taken to process what occurs in the groups in relation to group growth and development.

Practice

Introduction to Group Discussion

Because it is important for students to learn to observe and analyze group processes as well as to become effective group participants, in most exercises some observers should be assigned to watch and analyze the interaction and to process or discuss what they saw after the group work has been completed. Essentially, they are attempting to discover the processes the group goes through to reach its goal, including such things as who talks to whom, whose ideas are most influential, who drops out, how a certain person seems to be responding, and what norms of behaviors develop in the group. The "Fishbowl Discussion Technique" is a good method of training people to listen for process. Two circles are formed, one inside the other. The people in the inner circle decide upon a topic to be discussed and carry on a discussion, while the people in the outer circle observe. The people in the outer circle look for interaction patterns, roles, emergence of leadership, development of norms, and the like. After a certain period of time the discussion is stopped to allow the observers to identify the process. The discussion may be evaluated in terms of what helped or hindered the group's effectiveness. Later the observers and discussants may switch roles. Another possible variation of this exercise is to assign partners and have one of the pair in the inner circle and one in the outer circle. The person in the outer circle has the specific responsibility to observe and give feedback to his or her partner on how the partner contributed to, or detracted from, the discussion.

The following exercise may be used to introduce the area of group process and to help students analyze the areas in which they need help in working within groups. Assign a problem-solving situation to a large group of students. Write the problem on the board and leave the room or completely disassociate yourself from the discussion. Do not assign a leader. After twenty or thirty minutes ask for the solution or get a report of the discussion to that point by asking questions such as the following: What happened in the group after you got started? Who took the responsibility for moving the discussion along? How did the discussion keep moving? What problems, if any, did you encounter? Did you settle on any procedures? What factors helped or hindered the group's progress?

Definitions

Ask the students to break into small groups and to create a definition of a group. Having done so, ask them to analyze their small group and the entire class in terms of their definition and to determine to what extent the small unit or class is a group. Give them two or three other definitions of a group to compare with their original definition and to use in analyzing the small unit and class. A larger class discussion incorporating each group's results may follow the discussions of the small groups.

Group Development

Many of the exercises which are described under problem solving or decision making could be used for analyzing group development. It is advisable to have one student serve as an observer of the group's progress to analyze the stages the group goes through to reach its final solution. The observer should particularly look for evidence of the group's development in terms of Bales and Strodtbeck's or Fisher's models. After the task has been completed, the observer may lead the group in a discussion of the development of and stages in their interaction.

If students are actively engaged in an ongoing group project, they may be encouraged to keep a journal in which they record the nature of the group interaction each time the group meets. From these descriptions students should identify the various developmental stages their group has passed through and should compare these stages with those identified by Fisher and others.

Norms

After students have been working in small groups long enough to develop some normative behaviors and expectations as to how their interactions are to operate, without the group knowing about it, give certain students directions to violate the group norms. For example, students may be told to (1) talk about unacceptable topics in the group; (2) take on someone else's role, such as secretary, questioner, or compromiser; (3) violate spatial arrangement patterns; or (4) vie for leadership of the group or alter the leadership style already enacted. Tell the selected students to watch for other group members' reactions, the effect of their norm violation of the patterns of group interaction, the way in which the leader or the group as a whole handles the violation, and the altering or reinforcing of existing rules which govern the groups' interactions. After the violations have been made, have groups discuss the previously described issues. Ask students to reach some generalizations regarding the significance of norms and rules in the interaction of groups.

Cohesiveness

Divide students into small groups and give each group a box of Tinkertoy pieces. Tell students that they are to build the tallest self-supporting structure they can. They will have ten minutes to plan the structure as a group, during which time they can arrange the Tinkertoy pieces but may not assemble them. At a signal they will be allowed only forty seconds to build their structure. Each structure will be measured to determine which is the highest, and the winning structure must stand unsupported for a minute after construction has ceased. Have students discuss the way in which they planned their structure, the communication links and contribution of ideas of each member, the commitment of the group members to the task, the type of leadership demonstrated, and the impact of time constraints and competition with other groups on their cohesiveness.

Since group members tend to become more cohesive when their group is in competition with another group, the "Prisoner's Dilemma" exercise may be useful in considering this concept. (This exercise is adapted from J. W. Pfeiffer and J. Jones, eds., *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training.*[70])

Divide the class into two teams and have them assemble in opposite corners of the room. Call one the red team and the other

the blue team. Make four pieces of cardboard about the size of playing cards, and in large letters print one of the following letters on one side of each card: A, B, X, Y. Give the A and B cards to the red team and the X and Y cards to the blue team. To both teams state: "The only purpose of the game is to obtain the maximum number of positive points."

To obtain points, each team will select one of its playing cards (red chooses A or B and blue chooses X or Y), which is to be handed to the instructor at the end of each deliberation period. Each team is allotted three minutes to decide what card it will play. The instructor will call for the cards, show them to the groups, and record the points.

Each student should have a copy of the scoring sheet and should understand the possible outcomes.

		X	Y
		Blue Team	
Red Team	A	+3 / +3	+6 / −6
	B	−6 / +6	−3 / −3

If the red team plays the A card and the blue team plays the X card, both teams win 3 points.

If the red team plays the B card and the blue team plays the Y card, the red team loses 6 points and the blue team wins 6 points.

If the red team plays the B card and the blue team plays the X card, the blue team loses 6 points and the red team wins 6 points.

If the red team plays the B card and the blue team plays the Y card, both teams lose 3 points.

Scores are cumulatively recorded after each round, and scores below zero are recorded as negative points.

After the third round, a representative from each team may meet to negotiate future plans. If they ask what they are to discuss, merely remind them that the only purpose of the game is to obtain the maximum number of positive points. Be evasive. If they ask if they must tell the truth or abide by any decision they make, tell them that is a decision for each team to make. After three minutes of negotiations, have the representatives return to their respective teams. Be sure to allow the individual teams time to discuss their next play before calling for decisions. Remind them that scores are doubled from the fourth to the eighth round.

After the eighth round, whole teams meet to negotiate. (By this time, one team usually has a much higher score than the other and negotiation is usually futile. Involvement and emotion are

usually great.) Teams meet for about five minutes, before returning to their corners to decide what cards will be played. Scores are tripled for the ninth and tenth rounds.

Blue Team Plays	*Red Team Plays*	*Outcomes*
X	A	Both teams win 3 points
Y	A	Red team loses 6 points, blue team wins 6 points
X	B	Blue team loses 6 points, red team wins 6 points
Y	B	Both teams lose 3 points

Trial No. (Teams have 3 minutes to select option for each trial)

1
2
3 (Doubled) Representatives can meet for 3 minutes before 4th trial
4
5
6
7
8 (Tripled) Groups can meet for 5 minutes before 9th trial
9
10

Discussion

1. Analyze the game in terms of communication interference.
2. What effect did a lack of feedback have in the frustrations?
3. Why were people frustrated?
4. How honest were teams with each other? Why? How did their honesty or dishonesty affect the outcome?
5. How much trust was developed between the teams? Why?
6. Was there an element of competition? Why? Was it ever stated that one team should get more than the other to win?
7. What effect did this competition have on the communication?
8. What was the purpose of communication between teams, particularly when the representative negotiated? Did each team try to influence the other to do something?
9. What application does this have to everyday life? In world situations, how much better off would all people be if countries cooperated rather than competed? [71]

Conformity

The following exercise is based on an Asch Perception Study.[72]

> Have five or six subjects sit with their eyes closed while the others observe. The instructor, holding a length of string in his hands, goes to each subject and gives them the string for a moment. They are asked to decide the length of the string and to remember their answer. For one subject (usually the last one, or the one who will be called on last), the instructor will change the length of the string. For example, five students may get a 14-inch string and one will get a 6-inch string. (The question may also relate to the diameter of a ball, size of a box, etc.)
>
> Students will then be asked, individually, to tell the length of the string. Very often, the last person will "go along" with the group's estimate rather express his own perception of the length of the string.[73]

Once again, any of the exercises described under problem solving or decision making may be used as a stimulus for discussing the effect of group pressure on the individual's acquiescence to the group's decision.

To discuss the issue of whether or not group decisions are more accurate than individuals' decisions, the traditional "Lost on the Moon" exercise can be employed. Devised by Jay Hall, Associate Professor of Management at the University of Texas School of Business Administration, this exercise is based on actual work done by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Lost on the Moon

> You are in a space crew originally scheduled to rendezvous with a mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Mechanical difficulties, however, have forced your ship to crash land at a spot some 200 miles from the rendezvous point. The rough landing damaged much of the equipment aboard. Since survival depends on reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the 200 mile trip. Below are listed the 15 items left intact after the landing. Your task is to rank them in terms of their importance to your crew in its attempt to reach the rendezvous point. Place number 1 by the most important item, number 2 by the second most important item and so on through number 15, the least important.
>
> _____ Box of matches
>
> _____ Food concentrate
>
> _____ 50 feet of nylon rope

_____ Parachute silk
_____ Portable heating unit
_____ Two '45 calibre pistols
_____ One case of dehydrated milk
_____ Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen
_____ Stellar map (of moon's constellation)
_____ Life raft
_____ Magnetic compass
_____ 5 gallons of water
_____ Signal flares
_____ First-aid kit containing injection needles
_____ Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

Scoring Key

(15) Box of matches . . . little or no use on moon

(4) Food concentrate . . . supply daily food required

(6) 50 feet of nylon rope . . . useful in tying injured—help in climbing

(8) Parachute silk . . . shelter against sun's rays

(13) Portable heating unit . . . useful only if party landed on dark side

(11) Two .45 calibre pistols . . . self-propulsion devices could be made from them

(12) One case dehydrated milk . . . food, mixed with water for drinking

(1) Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen . . . fills respiration requirement

(3) Stellar map of moon's constellation . . . one of principal means of finding directions

(9) Life raft . . . CO^2 bottle for self-propulsion across chasms, etc.

(14) Magnetic compass . . . probably no magnetized pole; thus useless

(2) 5 gallons of water . . . replenishes loss by sweating, etc.

(10) Signal flares . . . distress call within line of sight

(7(First-aid kit containing injection needles . . . oral pills or injection medicine valuable

(5) Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter . . . distress signal transmitter, possible communication with mother ship [74]

Divide students into groups of five or six and give each student a copy of the problem. Ask students to individually decide what they think is the most logical ranking. Once each member of the group has ranked the items, the group is to reach a group consensus on a ranking. When each group has accomplished this task, instruct the individuals to score their own ranking and then the ranking of the group by comparing their answers with the scoring key. For each item, the score is the absolute difference between the student's ranking and the correct ranking. The total score is the sum of the scores for each item. The lowest score is the "best."

Each group should be instructed to compute the average individual score, the range of individual scores, the group score, and the difference between the average individual and the group scores. A class discussion may include the following questions: (1) Did the group do better than any individual? Did it do better than the average individual? Why? (2) Did some members have more influence than others? (3) How did your group reach agreement? What are the advantages and disadvantages of that method? (4) How did you feel when you were working in the group? (5) What are the advantages and disadvantages of working as a group? A comparison of groups should be considered by the entire class.

Problem Solving

To allow students to experience problem solving in groups, the following exercises are suggested. The exercises may be discussed in terms of the steps of problem solving or other group discussion concepts.

The group interaction art project[75] can be accomplished by dividing the class into groups of about five people and giving each group a blank poster board and two crayons. Tell the groups that they are to draw a team picture which integrates individual and group effort. They are to assign a team name to the picture. They have twenty minutes to complete the art project. No further instructions should be given to the groups. In fact, tell the students to ignore your presence; but it is advisable to walk around and observe the group interactions. You might want to take a few notes on what you observe in each group. Possibly, a student could be assigned to take notes on the interaction of each group, but this student should not participate or disclose his or her role.

When the twenty minutes have elapsed, hand the following (or similar) questions to the group, to be discussed: (1) Did the

group reach a consensus about what to do? Did each member contribute his or her ideas? Did anyone isolate himself or herself from the group? Was there an effort to solicit his or her ideas or was silence taken as approval of other ideas expressed? (2) Was there a leader? Was he or she self-appointed or chosen by the group? Did the person emerge because he or she was most vocal? By what methods did the leader gain that role? Was there any vying for leadership? (3) Was the drawing well organized beforehand, or was it spontaneous? (4) Was there equal opportunity for everyone to participate in the drawing? (5) Was the main concern of the group "getting the job done"? How was this expressed? If this was not the main concern, what was? (6) Did the group engage in any conscious, critical examination of its interpersonal relations and patterns by asking questions like "how are we doing?" (7) Did anyone color over another person's work? What was the reaction? Was there resentment or revenge? (8) Was any frustration shown? If so, how was it displayed? Was there comic relief? Antagonism? What effect did this have on the group interaction? (9) How did the artistic (or nonartistic) abilities of the group members affect the drawing? Did anyone feel inadequate? Did an artistic person draw the whole picture? (10) Did the picture illustrate the integration of individual ideas as well as group ideas? What does the picture say about the group's interaction pattern and cohesiveness?

After each group discusses its drawing, the drawings may be displayed and discussed by the entire class. Differences in how the individual groups interacted should be noted, particularly as revealed in the pictures.

Logic problems such as the four-car problem are fun for students to tackle and can easily be discussed in terms of the problem-solving steps.

The Four-Car Problem

You are facing a closed garage containing four cars parked side-by-side. Using the information given below, you should be able to tell the order in which the cars are parked, as well as the make, year, and color of each car and the state it is licensed in. You are provided with the following information:

1. The Rambler has a Pennsylvania license.
2. The yellow car has an Ohio license.
3. The Buick is next to the Plymouth.
4. The car with the New York license is parked between the 1971 and 1969 models.

5. The 1971 model is blue.
6. The Plymouth is on the right (as you face the cars).
7. The red car has a California license.
8. The Ford is next to the Rambler.
9. The car from Pennsylvania is not parked next to the car from Ohio.
10. The Ford is green.
11. The Plymouth was built in 1960.
12. The 1969 model has a California license.

Which car is a 1965 model?

Solution to the Four-Car Problem

Rambler	Ford	Buick	Plymouth
blue	green	red	yellow
1971	1965	1969	1960
PA	NY	CA	OHIO

Have the students carry out the exercise and then discuss the experience as previously suggested.

Another problem-solving exercise is the "Truth or Myth" exercise. [76]

Truth or Myth Exercise

A myth is a misconception which seems to be true on the surface. It is usually harmful because it fools its believers into thinking they are grasping the truth when, in fact, it prevents them from reaching it.

Pick three of the proverbs below and determine which are true and which are myths. Allow about ten to fifteen minutes on each proverb. Your group should come to a unanimous decision through explanation and persuasion; do not take a majority vote, average, or trade in reaching your decision. Avoid changing your own mind only in order to reach agreement, and avoid conflict. Support a decision only if you are really able to agree. View differences of opinion as helpful rather than as a hindrance in decision making.

"Myth" No. 1: Love is blind.

"Myth" No. 2: I am my brother's keeper.

"Myth" No. 3: Two wrongs never make a right.

"Myth" No. 4: Spare the rod; spoil the child.

"Myth" No. 5: Honesty is the best policy.

"Myth" No. 6: Marriage is a 50-50 proposition.

"Myth" No. 7: Silence is golden.

Have the students carry out the exercise as indicated in the directions and then discuss the exercise as previously suggested.

Decision Making

Johnny Rocco Case Study

Have students read the following case study and select from options 1 through 7 what should be done to Johnny Rocco. Once each student has decided what should be done to Johnny, have students reach a decision in their small groups as to what should be done to Johnny from the same scale. Generally, it is wise to put a time limit on the group discussion so that time is provided in the class to compare methods used by groups to reach their decisions. The various types of decision making should be evident. If time permits, groups or individuals may try to persuade the entire class to reach a class consensus. Often when small groups have reached a decision by majority vote or compromise rather than consensus, individual group members will leave their small groups to align themselves with other groups or individuals who share their decisions. As a follow-up discussion, the impact of different types of decision making on commitment of group members and the length of time necessary to arrive at different types of decisions can be discussed.

Johnny Rocco, the son of Italian immigrants, was born in a large Midwestern industrial city. There were nine other Rocco children when Johnny was born. One more child, David, came after Johnny. The neighborhood where the Rocco family lived was one of the worst slums in the city. It was known for its high rate of crime and juvenile delinquency. It was a neighborhood of factories, junk yards, pool rooms, cheap liquor joints, and broken houses.

By the time Johnny's father died four of the older Rocco children had married and moved away. What was left of the Rocco family continued in its dismal course, the children getting into one difficulty after another and Mrs. Rocco, sick and confused, trudging from school to police station to court, listening to complaints about them. Of the remaining children only one boy, Georgio, the oldest, assumed any responsibility toward the others. When the rest of the children got so out of hand that Mrs. Rocco implored him to do something, he beat them brutally.

One way Johnny's fumbling mother tried to pacify landlords was to keep her screaming, battling children out of the house and on the streets as much as possible. And one after another of the Rocco boys became known to the police. Five of Johnny's brothers, starting in childhood, ran up police records covering charges of

disturbing the peace, breaking and entering, larceny, perjury, assault and battery, and malicious injury.

"I was in the police station, too. Plenty," Johnny says. "Saturdays they had kids' day. We'd be in the long corridor. There'd be all little kids sitting down. They'd bring us in an' those jerks, the cops, they'd be sitting there an' this cop here, he was always insulting me. 'You little bastard,' he'd tell me, and he'd belt me. I was just _____ to him . . ."

He was a trial to his teachers. They complained that he was "nervous, sullen, obstinate, cruel, disobedient, disruptive." "Teachers can stand him for only one day at a time," one said. "He talks to himself. He fights. When in Miss Clark's room, he attempted to kick her. He isn't going to be promoted. He knows this and refuses to study."

With every new failure he was compelled to some new misbehavior. Once, at the beginning of a new semester he told his teacher, "I wasn't promoted. Okay, this year I'm going to make plenty of trouble." With every new punishment, Johnny's conviction grew that his teachers, like everybody else, were "against him."

During the months of Johnny's friendship with Mr. O'Brien (a Big Brother), his teachers found that he was making a tremendous effort to behave, but that he was "like a kettle of boiling water with the lid about to blow off." Johnny managed to get through that term at school without too much trouble and was promoted, but school hadn't been out long before he fell into trouble with the police again, this time for breaking into a house and stealing fifty dollars worth of jewelry. Before he appeared in court, Mr. O'Brien visited him. Johnny, Mr. O'Brien reported, seemed "unhappy, but stolid and apathetic, though once or twice, as we walked, he verged on tears."

Johnny didn't deny the theft and as his confession poured out, Mr. O'Brien asked, "Even when I thought you were being a good boy, Johnny, were you stealing all the while?" Johnny, verging on tears, replied, "Yes, sometimes. But lots of times I didn't steal, because I thought of you."

Love-Punishment Scale

1. Love, kindness, and friendship are all that are necessary to make Johnny a better kid. If he can be placed in a more agreeable environment, a warm, friendly foster home, for example, his troubles will clear up.
2. Johnny should be put into surroundings where most emphasis will be placed on providing him with warmth and affection, but he will be punished if he really gets out of hand.
3. He should be sent into an environment where providing Johnny with warmth and affection will be emphasized slightly more than punishing him, but discipline and punishment will be frequent if his behavior warrants it.

4. Johnny needs an equal measure of both love and discipline. Thus, he should be placed in an atmosphere where he will be disciplined and punished if he does wrong but rewarded and given affection if he behaves himself and where equal emphasis will be placed on both love and discipline.
5. Though they shouldn't be too strong and frequent, punishment and discipline should be more emphasized than kindness and affection. Thus, Johnny should be placed in an atmosphere where he will be seriously disciplined but which will allow opportunities for warmth and kindness to him.
6. He should be sent into surroundings where most emphasis will be placed on disciplining and punishing Johnny, but there should be possibility for praise and kindness if he really behaves himself.
7. There's very little you can do with a kid like this, but put him in a very severe disciplinary environment. Only by punishing him strongly can we change his behavior.

The following is another exercise which focuses on group decision making.

Have each person in the group make a decision as to who he or she would select in the following situation. After each person has reached his or her decision, have the group reach a decision as to who should go on the trip. Follow with a discussion on how decisions are made in the group (i.e., majority, authority, consensus, compromise). How difficult was it for the group to reach a decision on an issue that involved personal values? How easy is it to change someone's mind when he or she is deeply committed to his or her decision? Did they consider the social aspects of the group membership as well as the special tasks each could fulfill?

You are a member of an outing club. To pass the final survival-in-the-out-of-doors test you must live out of touch with civilization for one month in the wilderness with no provisions other than the clothes on your back, matches, a piece of nylon material the size of a parachute, 100 yards of rope, and an axe. You may select only four other people to go on this trip with you from the 10 others who are ready for this test. Consider your own strengths and weaknesses as you choose the other people.

Susie—A fun-loving witty person who writes and tells her own stories and poems. She is very creative and would keep things light. She is also good at breaking up arguments.

Max—Six feet tall, 175 pounds, he is strong and capable in the out-of-doors. He is a leader but will not cooperate in work unless tasks are done his way.

Sally—A good cook who prides herself on her ability to cook wild game in gourmet style in the kitchen. Friendly person, but emotional.

Sam—Botany student who knows plants, berries, vegetables, and fruits. He would be able to identify poisonous food. Not much of a conversationalist.

Jim—Has had training as a medic in the army. Tells everybody of all his experiences working in army base hospitals in the emergency rooms, but hasn't spent a lot of time "roughing it." Also loves to tell people all of his "war" stories.

Sarah—Really a "sharp-shooter." Member of the rifle team and has won many awards in archery.

Carol—A good outdoors woman; however, she is very allergic to poison ivy and has hay fever. As long as she feels physically well, her general knowledge of camping and nature would be an asset.

Steve—A rambunctious person who likes to get things done so he can enjoy life. He flirts with the girls and teases a lot, but is fairly well liked by the others.

Kit—Is an avid swimmer and has taken up skin-diving. She would really like to go on the survival trip and says she could make a spear and dive down to catch fish for food. Also she says she could save a drowning person.

Tom—A democratic-type leader who has the ability to see what needs to be done, allocate the jobs to others, and accomplish the task. He is the husband of Carol and will not go on the trip unless she comes too."[77]

Networks

Place students in small groups with assigned positions and communication rules to designate to whom they can talk. The groups should be arranged so that they reflect the wheel, Y, circle, and chain networks. Assign each group the same task (such as solving one of the logic problems previously described). Compare (1) the time it takes each group to solve the task, (2) the satisfaction each member felt with the group and the solution, (3) the accuracy of each group, and (4) the cohesiveness perceived by each group. Compare the results of these groups with the findings of Leavitt.[78]

Give students various real-life situations, such as a political campaign, a cancer drive, a social group, or a bargaining committee, and ask them to determine which type of network would be best for each group to most efficiently accomplish its goals. Discussion should include the advantages and disadvantages that will be found in each type of network in various situations.

Roles

Family Role Play

This exercise is based on a workshop by Virginia Satir. Divide the class into five-person groups. Ask the groups to determine what kind of a family they will be (see the list of family types) and who will assume the position of what member of the family. Also ask them to assume a new name. Thus, one student named Anne may say, "I am the fifty-year-old grandmother named Jennifer."

Then the family must create a problem that they have to settle as a group, for example, moving, a family vacation, wedding plans, or adoption. When they have formulated a problem, assign each person one of the roles. Ask the group members to begin to solve the problem in role. After a period of time you may reassign the roles so that each individual experiences playing different behaviors.

After they are finished ask them to work as a group to determine the effect of the different roles on themselves and others in the group. They should discover how one type of person plays off another, the effect of status (e.g., parents) on the strength of a role, the way patterns of communication may develop within such a group as a family, and the like.

Family Types

1. *Natural Family:* Two adults and their children
2. *One-Parent Family:* Single adult and children
3. *Blended Family:* Two adults whose union did not produce all the children (may include step-children, adopted children, or foster children)
4. *Extended Family:* Includes such people as grandparents or other relatives and such a family unit as a commune

Roles

Placating: Insists on credit for all that goes wrong; dedicates life to stopping all trouble; gives time, money, and effort to right wrongs; believes that "if you are deserving you will receive things without asking for them"; typical verbal pattern: "I'm sorry, I do try, excuse me."

Blaming: Takes credit for all that goes right; finds fault with everything; puts responsibility for problems on others; typical verbal pattern: "You never do . . . Why don't you ever . . . You always . . ."

Super-Reasonable: Uses pronouns sparsely, relies on "one," "it"; uses the longest words possible; uses as many details as

possible; always proper and controlled; typical verbal pattern: "Now if we just think this out . . . it seems reasonable to assume . . ."

Irrelevant: Never stays on the verbal point; constantly interjects with non sequiturs; physically and mentally seems to be constantly moving; typical verbal pattern: anything that is not directly on the subject of the conversation.

Assign observers to use observation tools based on either Benne and Sheats' roles or Bales' categories while watching a group discussion in which they are paired with one of the participants. Have them record their partner's behavior according to the roles he or she assumes and give their partner feedback after the discussion is stopped. At this point they may both resume the same position so that the group participants attempt to become more effective based on the feedback, or they may reverse positions so that the observer becomes a participant and receives feedback on his or her behavior.

Leadership

In order to help students identify the strengths they bring to a leadership position, create a check sheet for students describing issues in leadership you deem important and ask them to rate themselves according to the chart using the following rating scale: always, frequently, occasionally, seldom, and never. Sample statements (adapted from Johnson and Johnson, *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills*) include the following:

1. I give direction to the group by developing plans on how to proceed with the work and by focusing members' attention on the tasks at hand.
2. I use observations of the group process to aid in examining the areas in which the group is strong and in which it needs help.
3. I propose group goals and procedures in order to start action within the group.
4. I support the openness of other group members, reinforcing them for taking risks and encouraging individuality in group members.

If the atmosphere is conducive to such interpersonal feedback, students may answer the chart according to how they see the leadership capabilities of other people in the group.

The following exercise will allow students to experience the three types of leadership on the continuum from authoritarian to democratic to laissez-faire and to determine the effectiveness of each type according to the specific situation. Unknown to other class members, assign three students a different type of leadership role and have three groups (and observers) participate in teacher-assigned problem-solving discussion in different parts of the room. Give the following directions to the leaders:

Authoritarian

Do not pass the written problem around but read it to the group. Express what you consider to be the desirable solution and try to bring the group to this solution. Express your solution as the group answer but make allowances for a minority point of view if pushed. Direct all the comments during the discussion.

Democratic

Pass the written problem around and get reactions from all members. Try to summarize or synthesize at different points and be sure everyone gets a chance to speak. Note your opinion, but just as a member. Try to create a group consensus or give a majority/minority report as a final solution.

Laissez-Faire

Immediately give away the written problem and tell the group they have a problem to solve. Do not take responsibility for directing the discussion and do not express a strong personal solution. Give the group solution only if no one else will.

Discussion may include some of the following areas: Describe the behavior of your group's leader and your reaction to this behavior. To what extent was the leader helpful in bringing you toward a solution? In what situations might this leadership style be effective? How did you feel as a group member with this type of leader?[79]

The following exercise from Pfeiffer and Jones[80] may be used to analyze role and leader behavior. Although the topic used here is "choosing a color," if you can find a topic more directly suited to your class, the exercise can be revised. This exercise is designed for simultaneous groups of seven to ten members for a period of twenty to thirty minutes.

Materials Utilized

I. *Envelope I:* Directions for group task, plus 7 to 10 envelopes containing individual directions for role and position.

II. *Envelope II:* Directions and group task.
III. *Envelope III:* Directions and group task.
IV. Large envelope containing first three envelopes.
V. Description of roles to be played.

Process

The participants are introduced to role playing. The facilitator may want to use a fantasy exercise for warm-up. The following roles may be used: (a) information seeking, (b) tension relieving, (c) clarifying, (d) gatekeeping, (e) initiating, (f) following, (g) information giving, and (h) harmonizing.

The facilitator places the large envelope containing the instruction envelopes in the center of the group with no further instructions or information.

The instructions written on the large envelope which contains all other envelopes are as follows:

> Enclosed you will find three envelopes which contain directions for the phases of this group session. You are to open the first one (labeled "I") at once. Subsequent instructions will tell you when to open the second (labeled "II") and third (labeled "III") envelopes.

Envelopes I, II, and III will contain the following directions on separate sheets:

Directions for Envelope I

Time Allowed: 15 minutes

Special Instructions: Each member is to take one of the white envelopes and follow the individual instructions contained in it.

Task: The group is to choose a color.

Do not let anyone else see YOUR instructions!

(After fifteen minutes go on to the next envelope.)

Directions for Envelope II

Time Allowed: 5 minutes

Task: You are to choose a group chairman.

(After five minutes go on to the next envelope.)

Directions for Envelope III

Time Allowed: 10 minutes

Task: You are to evaluate the first phase of this group session.

Special Instructions: The newly selected chairman will lead this discussion. Sample questions: (1) What behavior was effective in promoting the purposes assigned to individuals? (2) What behavior was harmful in promoting the purposes assigned to individuals?

(After 10 minutes return the directions to their respective envelopes.)

Each individual instruction envelope for phase I will contain instructions for role and position. Two of the instructions will include special knowledge. The information will be given on a card in this manner:

Role: Information Seeking Position: Support Blue

The following roles, positions, and special information will be assigned in the following order:

1. *Role:* Information seeking
   Position: Support blue
2. *Role:* Tension relieving
   Position: Introduce the idea of a different color—orange
3. *Role:* Clarifying
   Position: Support red
4. *Role:* None
   Position: None
   (You have the special knowledge that the group is going to be asked to select a chairman later in the exercise; you are to conduct yourself in such a manner that they will select you as chairman.)
5. *Role:* Gatekeeping
   Position: Against red
6. *Role:* Initiating
   Position: Support green
7. *Role:* None
   Position: None
   (You have the special knowledge that the group is going to be asked to select a chairman later in the exercise; conduct yourself in such a manner that they will select you as chairman.)
8. *Role:* Following
   Position: Against red

9. *Role:* Information giving
   Position: Against blue
10. *Role:* Harmonizing
    Position: Against green

If there are fewer than ten participants in the group, simply eliminate as many of the last three roles and positions as are necessary. There must be at least seven people in the group.

Discussion may proceed as follows: Ask the individuals who attempted to be selected as leader how they behaved to try to ensure their selection. Ask the other students how they perceived these individuals. Ask students to consider the effect that their roles had on other students and how they were affected by the roles assumed by others.

Environment

Have small groups (with observers) conduct three five-minute discussions using the following formats:

1. Circle but with backs to each other
2. Circle around a table
3. Rectangle around a table
4. Circle but with no table

Ask the participants to discuss their feelings in each of these situations and to analyze any differences in productivity among the groups. Ask the observers to discuss differences in communication among the settings, concentrating on such areas as amount of communication, emergence of leadership, supportive or critical behavior, use of questions, and nonverbal body movements.

Provide students with a variety of seating plans, drawn by you or taken from magazine pictures, and ask them to analyze the situations according to their potential effect on communication. Seating-plan analysis might include a discussion of possibilities for eye contact, leadership, and subgroups. If the pictures include a sense of the room, ask them to determine the effect of the decor on communication. If possible, you may be able to have the class experience meeting in different environments, or at least in different seating patterns, and to analyze the effect these settings have on their communication behavior.

To determine the effect that the size of a group has on the problem-solving capacity, ask fifteen students to work on three different problems in groups of three, five, and fifteen. Have

observers analyze the differences in individual student behavior as they move from one size group to another and determine differences in kinds of interaction, amount of interaction, atmosphere, and leadership emergence.

Interpersonal Atmosphere

To aid the students in both knowing and understanding each other better, the following self- and other-awareness exercises may be useful.

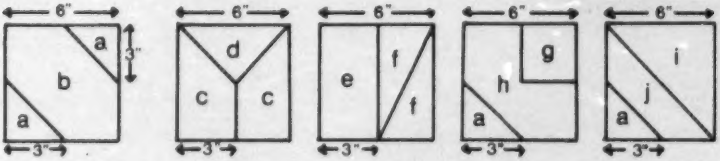
Give students (1) lists of values and ask them to select the five that are most important to them or (2) a list of personal characteristics and ask them to select the five that most closely represent them. They may share their choices with the class.

Have students answer self-assessment completion exercises (e.g., I get very angry when . . .; I like people to think I am . . .; or When people depend on me, I . . .) or create sentences for students to complete about themselves. Ask them to reflect on the composite answers and the implications in terms of self-image (e.g., If I were _____ (an animal, historical figure, magazine, tree, or geometric figure), I'd be a _____. If I received a telegram, I'd like it to say _____.) Discuss the answers.

An Experiment in Cooperation

This exercise is an adaptation of an exercise included in Pfeiffer and Jones. [81]

Before class, prepare a set of squares and an instruction sheet for each group of five students. A set consists of five envelopes containing pieces of stiff paper cut into patterns that will form five six-by-six-inch squares, as shown in the diagram.



By using multiples of three inches, several combinations will form one or two squares. Only one combination will form five six-by-six-inch squares. Thus, several individual combinations but only one total combination will be possible. Cut each square into parts a through j and lightly pencil in the letters.

Then mark the envelopes A through E and distribute the pieces as follows: Envelope A, pieces i, h and e; B, pieces a, a, a and c; C, pieces a and j; D, pieces d and f; and E, pieces g, b, f and c. Erase the small letters from the pieces and write instead the envelope letters A through E so that the pieces can be easily returned for reuse.

Divide the class into groups of five. All the students need to understand the problem. All the students need to believe that they can help. Instructions must be clear. All the students need to think of the other persons as well as themselves. Describe the experiment as a puzzle that requires cooperation. Read the instructions aloud and give each group a reference copy. Then give the signal to open the envelopes.

The instructions are as follows:

> Each person should have an envelope containing pieces for forming squares. At the signal, the task of the group is to form five squares of equal size. The task is not completed until each person has formed a perfect square and all the squares are of the same size. The rules are as follows: No member may speak. No member may ask for a piece or in any way signal that he or she wants one. Members may give pieces to others. Members may not take pieces. All pieces may not go in the middle.

When all or most of the groups have finished, call time and discuss the experience. Ask such questions as the following: How did you feel when someone held a piece and did not see the solution? What was your reaction when someone finished his or her square and then sat back without seeing whether his or her solution prevented others from solving the problem? What were your feelings if you finished your square and then began to realize that you would have to break it up and give away a piece? How did you feel about the person who was slow at seeing the solution? If you were that person, how did you feel? Was there a climate that helped or hindered?

If students have helped to monitor, they may have observations to share. In summarizing the discussion, you may wish to review behaviors listed at the beginning. You may also want to ask whether or not the game relates to the way the class works from day to day.

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